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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study of the impact of an integrated teacher education program for diversity on two beginning teachers and considers the challenges involved in investigating the impact of such programs. The study examined four elementary school teachers in their first or second year of teaching who were working in schools that served high percentages of racial minority and low-income students. Two of the teachers graduated from a master's teacher education program, Teaching in Urban Contexts (TUC), which integrated attention to diversity throughout its courses and field experiences, while the other teachers were trained in programs that used a segregated approach to issues of diversity. Results suggest that the TUC program may have influenced its graduates' expectations for students, their approach to incorporating students' backgrounds into instruction, the extent to which they collaborated with colleagues, and their level of commitment to school renewal. The paper elaborates on teachers' expectations for students and the incorporation of student backgrounds into instruction. The paper also discusses three challenges in trying to determine the impact of integrated programs for diversity on teachers' practices: (1) that teachers are influenced by their beliefs and experiences as well as their formal preparation; (2) participants in the same program may be differentially affected by program components; and (3) findings from one program for diversity may not apply to other programs. (Contains 34 references.) (Author/SLD)

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Challenges in Studying the Impact of Integrated Approaches to Preparing Teachers for Diversity

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September 13, 1999

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Abstract

This paper reports on a study of the impact of an integrated teacher education program for diversity on two beginning teachers and considers the challenges involved in investigating the impact of such programs. The study examined four elementary school teachers in their first or second year of teaching who were working in schools that served high percentages of racial minority and low-income students. Two of the teachers graduated from a master's teacher education program, Teaching in Urban Contexts (TUC), which integrated attention to diversity throughout its courses and field experiences, while the other teachers were trained in programs that used a segregated approach to addressing issues of diversity. Results from the study suggest that the TUC program may have influenced the TUC teachers' expectations for students, their approach to incorporating students' backgrounds into instruction, the extent to which they collaborated with colleagues, and the level of their commitment to school renewal. This paper elaborates on two of these findings – those regarding teachers' expectations for students and their incorporation of students' backgrounds into instruction – and considers how the TUC program may have contributed to them.

The paper also discusses three challenges involved in trying to determine the impact of integrated programs for diversity on teachers' practices. One challenge is that teachers are influenced not only by their experiences in teacher education, but also by their beliefs and experiences prior to formal preparation and by the contexts in which they work. Second, participants in the same program may be differentially affected by various components of the program such as coursework, practicum experiences, cohort structure, or thesis. Finally, even when particular programs are found to have discernible effects on the beliefs and practices of their graduates, such findings do not readily apply to other integrated programs for diversity because such programs are structured in a variety of ways and prepare teachers to work in a variety of contexts.

Many students in elementary and secondary schools in the United States come from racial, ethnic, social class, and first-language backgrounds that are different from those of their teachers, and the percentage of racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority students is likely to continue increasing for at least the next few decades (Pallas, Natriello, & McDill, 1989). In view of these changing demographics (National Center for Education Statistics, 1992; Quality Education for Minorities Project, 1990; Children's Defense Fund, 1991), teacher educators are increasingly employing curricular, pedagogical, and programmatic strategies designed to prepare teachers to work effectively with diverse populations. These strategies are typically implemented in teacher education programs through either a segregated or an integrated approach (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996).

In programs employing a segregated approach, diversity is only addressed in a small number of courses. Several researchers have found that such programs have little long-term impact on teachers' beliefs and practices (e.g., Grant & Koskella, 1986; Goodwin, 1994). By contrast, programs using an integrated approach address issues of diversity throughout their courses and field experiences. Given the limited effectiveness of teacher education programs that use a segregated approach, there is an urgent need for research that examines the impact of programs that integrate attention to diversity on teachers who are working with culturally diverse students.

Based on a study of four beginning elementary school teachers, this paper describes the impact of an integrated program for diversity on two teachers and considers the challenges involved in trying to determine the impact of such programs on teachers' beliefs and practices. One challenge is that teachers are influenced not only by their experiences in teacher education, but also by their beliefs and experiences prior to formal preparation and by the contexts in which they work. Second, participants in the same program may be differentially affected by various components of the program such as coursework, practicum experiences, cohort structure, or thesis. Finally, even when particular programs are found to have discernible effects on the beliefs and practices of their graduates, such findings do not readily apply to other integrated programs for diversity because such

programs are structured in a variety of ways and prepare teachers to work in a variety of contexts. In view of these challenges, this paper concludes by offering suggestions for further research on the impact of integrated teacher education programs for diversity.

Research Questions

The study examined the beliefs and practices of four elementary school teachers who were in their first or second year of teaching and who were working in schools serving high percentages of racial and ethnic minorities and low-income students. In particular, I examined whether the teachers believed that 1) all children are capable of academic success; and 2) their curricular and pedagogical practices should reflect students' interests and backgrounds. To understand the impact of teacher education, though, it was necessary to examine not only the four teachers' beliefs, but also their instructional practices (Pajares, 1992; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984; Goodman, 1988). Therefore, this study considered the relationship between the teachers' practices and 1) their expectations for students, as well as 2) their beliefs about incorporating students' interests and backgrounds into their instruction.

For each teacher, the relationships between their beliefs and practices were mediated by several aspects of their classroom and school contexts. Accordingly, in addressing the first question, I examined how the work processes that occur in each teacher's classroom reflected and influenced their expectations for their students. In terms of the second question, I considered how the nature of each teacher's students and the faculty culture in their school shaped the extent to which their instructional practices reflected their students' interests and cultural backgrounds. Finally, in trying to understand to impact of teacher education on the teachers' beliefs and practices, it was necessary to consider how they had been influenced by their experiences prior to formal preparation. Therefore, this study examined how the teachers' beliefs and practices had been affected by their backgrounds, particularly their prior work experiences.

Program Descriptions

Two of the teachers in the study graduated from a special master's teacher education program, Teaching in Urban Contexts (TUC), at a large public university in the Midwest. Based on a partnership between the Danville School District and the school of education at the university, TUC was an experimental program that trained three cohorts of prospective teachers (in 1994-95, 1995-96, and 1996-97). The program integrated attention throughout its coursework and field experiences to issues related to race, ethnicity, social class, language, and ability; and their relationship to teaching and learning. The other two teachers were trained at the same university in programs that used a segregated approach. Although some of the courses in their programs provoked them to think and write about issues of diversity, these issues were not addressed in a concentrated way across different components of the programs.

The TUC program employed several strategies to prepare teachers to work with diverse populations. One strategy, designed to generate high expectations among prospective teachers for all students, was to assign articles and books about teachers who have been successful with minority students. Another strategy was to have student teachers address their students' social and emotional growth as well as their cognitive development. Throughout the courses and field experiences, several faculty members emphasized the importance of building a sense of community in the classroom in which all students were treated with respect by other children and adults. Third, some courses provided prospective teachers with strategies for learning about their students' cultural backgrounds and prior learning experiences, and translating this information into appropriate practices. At the same time, several faculty emphasized the need for teachers to help minority students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in school and to counter society's low expectations for them.

A fourth strategy in the TUC program was to place program participants in schools serving high percentages of minority, low-income students and to have them complete field experiences in their students' communities. Each cohort of

program participants took all of their classes together without non-TUC students and each cohort was divided into three groups of approximately eight students who did their student teaching at the same school. During their placements, the TUC students attended structured seminars that were team-taught by university and school faculty. These weekly seminars provided opportunities for them to reflect on their experiences in student teaching and community fieldwork. In contrast, the programs that trained the non-TUC graduates placed much less emphasis on generating high expectations among program participants, the importance of fostering community, or incorporating knowledge of students into instructional practices. Further, the non-TUC students did not carry out their student teaching in cohorts and had fewer structured opportunities to reflect on their practice.

Theoretical Framework

The study drew on three bodies of literature in considering the influence of an integrated approach to teacher education for diversity on teachers' beliefs and practices. I referred to research on teachers who have been successful with culturally diverse students (e.g., Moll, 1988; Cummins, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Foster, 1995) because the TUC program was designed to prepare teachers to work effectively with minority, low-income students. This literature helped me to better understand the TUC program and to evaluate whether the beliefs and practices of the TUC graduates corresponded to the philosophy of the program.

To understand the impact of formal preparation on the teachers' beliefs and practices as distinct from, or in combination with, other factors, I drew on research on how teachers are influenced by their beliefs and practices prior to formal preparation (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1983; Knowles & holt-Reynolds, 1991; Hollingsworth, 1989). In particular, I considered the extent to which each teacher's beliefs and practices were compatible, or in conflict, with the philosophies of their programs; and how, if at all, each teacher's beliefs had changed since they entered their programs. Finally, I referred to literature on the sociology of teaching (e.g., McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Connell, 1985; Marshall & Weinstein,

1984; Barr & Dreeben, 1983; Metz, 1986) in considering how the teachers' beliefs and practices were mediated by the contexts in which they work. This research helped me understand some of the tensions and contradictions between the teachers' beliefs and practices.

Methods

This study employed a case study methodology because its purpose was to examine in close detail how four teachers might have learned different things from different kinds of experiences in teacher preparation. For each case, I sought "to provide an in-depth portrait of (the) teacher, with as much salient data as possible, and to interpret the case with reference to the research questions" of the study (Grossman, 1990, p.157). As a result, each case became the first unit of analysis. After seeking to identify patterns and themes within each individual case, I conducted cross-case analysis to try to identify patterns and themes in these teachers' beliefs and practices.

I observed each teacher three or four times and interviewed each teacher on two or three occasions. In each case, the observations took place once a week over a three- to four-week period. The observations lasted 90 minutes to two hours and occurred during literacy instruction. I observed each teacher on multiple occasions for a number of reasons. For one, I wanted to see them carrying out different types of reading and writing instruction. Second, I wanted to spend enough time in each classroom to become familiar with the teacher, the students, their typical routines, and the layout of the room. Third, I wanted to observe a sufficient number of times to see teaching and learning that, according to the teachers, was representative of what actually occurred in their classrooms. In other words, in case a teacher and/or one or more students had a particularly bad day during one of my visits, I wanted to be able to determine whether this was typical or unusual for them.

The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes and took place in the participants' classrooms, except for one teacher who was interviewed in her home. At the beginning of the first interview, I asked all of the teachers to describe their

backgrounds, their reasons for going into teaching, and their primary goals as teachers. I then posed a series of more focused questions designed to elicit information about their curricular, pedagogical, grouping, and assessment practices; their experiences during formal preparation, including coursework and student teaching; and their experiences during their years of teaching. Although I followed the same protocol with each teacher, I added questions for all of the participants based on their responses to earlier questions and observation data. In particular, I asked each teacher questions about some of the instructional activities I witnessed in reading and writing.

The selection of research participants was built into the problem that I wanted to investigate (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). In particular, I chose to study elementary school teachers in Danville because the demographics of the student population in the Danville School District were undergoing a dramatic transformation. In 1976-77, 94 percent of the students in the district were White and in 1986-87, 84 percent were White. As of 1996-97, the year in which the research for the study was conducted, the percentage of White students had decreased to 70 percent. In the same year, African American students made up 17 percent of the student population, Latino students made up four percent, Southeast Asians made up four percent, other Asians made up four percent, and American Indians made up one percent. Further, the percentage of low-income students, i.e., those receiving free or reduced-price lunch, increased from 17 percent in 1987-88 to 24 percent in 1996-97.

All four of the teachers who participated in the study were White women, and all were in their first or second year of teaching in schools that serve significant numbers of minority, low-income students. One of the TUC graduates, Mary, taught third grade at Frederick Elementary School, which served 61 percent minority students and 50 percent low-income students. Most of the minority students at Frederick were African American, White, or Latino. The other TUC graduate, Sarah, taught second grade at Peters Elementary School, which served 39 percent minority students and 37 percent free and reduced-price lunch. Cathy, one of the other teachers in the study, taught kindergarten at Peters, which served primarily White, Asian, or African American students. Renee, the fourth

participant, taught first grade at Christie Elementary which served 25 percent minority students - most of whom were African American - and 20 percent free and reduced-price lunch,

A few months after completing my research, I met with each teacher to hear their reactions to my preliminary findings and to pose some follow-up questions. I incorporated the data from the follow-up interviews into each individual case and the cross-case analysis. For the study, I also interviewed a university faculty member and a school-site supervisor who were involved in the TUC program to learn more about the program's history and structure.

Findings

Due to the small sample size, it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions from this research about the impact of the TUC program on beginning teachers. Nonetheless, the results suggest that the program may have influenced the beliefs and practices of the two TUC teachers in the study in several important ways. For one, while each of the four teachers indicated that they believed that all children are capable of academic success, they organized their classrooms in different ways, which had important implications for equity. The two TUC graduates, Mary and Sarah, established equitable environments in which all students were perceived by the teacher and their peers as being capable of academic success and had equal access to challenging learning materials (Cohen & Lotan, 1997). In contrast, the other two teachers, Cathy and Renee, employed some teaching and learning processes that promoted status inequities among students. Consequently, despite having high expectations for all of their students, they each had students who did not feel academically competent.

Second, both of the TUC graduates were much more committed to school renewal than the other teachers. The study suggests that the TUC program helped prospective teachers understand the importance of being familiar with the organization of the school in which they worked, as opposed to a single classroom, by placing them during their practicums with more than one teacher in the same

school over two semesters. Perhaps as a result, one of the TUC teachers in the study became actively involved in school restructuring at her school while the other pressed the faculty at her school to adopt a common reading philosophy. Third, the study revealed that both of the TUC graduates collaborated with colleagues. The importance of collaboration seems to have been reinforced for TUC participants by the program's cohort structure and by their experiences in weekly school-site seminars. The study suggests that the focus on collaboration led one TUC teacher to seek out allies at her school who helped her reflect on and make decisions about her instructional practices.

A fourth noteworthy finding was that TUC, on its own, was not sufficient for ensuring that teachers learned to incorporate knowledge of students' backgrounds into instruction and help them learn to think critically about issues and events. While one of the TUC graduates helped students learn to analyze issues and events from the perspectives of different cultural groups, the other "append(ed) ethnic content, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure (Banks, 1993). The next two sections of the paper elaborate on two of these findings - those regarding teachers' expectations for students and their incorporation of students' backgrounds into instruction - and considers how the TUC program may have contributed to them. In trying to ascertain the program's impact, I also examine whether the teachers' beliefs and practices were influenced by their experiences prior to formal preparation and the contexts in which they work, and whether they were differentially affected by various components of the program.

Expectations for Students

The teaching and learning processes that go on in classrooms influence teachers' and students' perceptions of students' abilities. These processes include the academic tasks in the classroom, the teachers' grouping practices, the assessment procedures, and the provision of special services (Bossert, 1979; Marshall & Weinstein, 1984). These processes can help to build inequities among students if they result in students being frequently and visibly compared to each other along a

single dimension of ability. Alternatively, they can reinforce teachers' high expectations for students by reducing the frequency and visibility of public comparisons and/or providing opportunities for students to demonstrate abilities in multiple areas.

While each of these processes affects students' expectations for themselves and their peers, their influence is mediated by the nature of the overall classroom environment. In particular, teachers who hold a multidimensional view of ability can overcome the potentially detrimental effects of assigning tasks that differ in content and level of difficulty or of conducting assessment in a publicly visible way. Similarly, teachers who establish a strong sense of community among their students are likely to minimize the effects of status differences on the self-perceptions of low-ability students. In contrast, teachers who believe that ability is unidimensional or that do not build community among their students will be less likely to create equitable classroom environments.

Task Structure. The study revealed that all four teachers engaged their students in tasks that involved divergent processes and/or resulted in divergent products, thereby hindering students from making comparative evaluations. Sarah had her second-graders do an experientially-based writing activity called "class news" every two weeks in which she divided them into pairs and had them write about recent and pending classroom events. The children chose their own topics and often worked with peers whose writing abilities differed from their own. Mary individualized instruction by having her third-graders work on independent research projects. For each project, the children had to choose a topic, think of ten questions related to their topic, and look for books in the library to help answer their questions.

Like the TUC graduates, Renee engaged her first-graders in some tasks that involved divergent processes. In a unit on ponds, she had each child "look at pond water under a microscope and write their own stories about their pond." She allowed them to write as much as they wanted; some wrote a few sentences about what they saw while others completed lengthy stories. In addition, all three of these teachers had their students write in journals on a regular basis. As for Cathy, her

kindergartners went to the Writing-To-Read computer lab for 30 minutes each morning during the second half of the school year. Writing-To-Read is a literacy instruction program that consists of seven cycles, each of which includes three words. The children were expected to learn the words in each cycle, and the sounds in the words, by doing workbook and computer exercises. At the outset, all of the children started with the first cycle of the program. From then on, they proceeded at their own pace to learn the words and sounds in other cycles. At the Writing-To-Read lab, Cathy had her students write at least one sentence on the computer twice a week, a task that involved divergent products.

Assessment Practices. All four teachers employed assessment procedures that promoted equity among their students. Each of them assessed their students' reading and writing abilities privately. Sarah used running records three times a year, which enabled her to evaluate students' progress in reading while she read one-on-one with them. Mary acquired a lot of information about her students when she helped them select books, when she talked with them about their research projects, and when she read their journals, in which they wrote about what they were reading. For her part, Renee assessed her students when she read one-on-one with them while Cathy monitored her children's progress as they worked independently on the Writing-To-Read cycles.

Each teacher held a multidimensional view of ability and provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their strengths in a variety of ways. For example, Sarah and Cathy frequently had their children act out stories that their whole class had read. In Mary's classroom, the students divided into three groups from time to time and worked on plays. Finally, all four teachers evaluated students' work in comparison with their earlier efforts, not in comparison to their peers. Mary often looked back at her students' journal entries and independent research projects from earlier in the year to assess their performance while Renee showed her students the progress they had made in their journals, on writing samples, with vocabulary words, and with regard to the difficulty level of their books.

Provision of Special Services. While all four teachers promoted equity through their tasks and assessment procedures, they employed different approaches to grouping their students and coordinating the provision of special services. The two TUC graduates, Mary and Sarah, minimized the effects of status differences caused by the provision of special services. In Mary's classroom, more than half the students received Title I, English as a Second Language (ESL), Learning Disabled (LD), or Speech and Language services. Concerned that these students would perceive themselves, or be perceived by others, as being low-achievers, she arranged for all of the services to be provided during a 90-minute language arts block at the beginning of the school day. In this way, the stigma associated with receiving special services was eliminated. For her part, Sarah had eight students who received Title I services. These students participated in the same reading and writing activities as other students in the class. When they left the classroom to work with the Title I teacher, Sarah did not engage the remaining students in special or more advanced literacy activities; instead, they selected books and read independently.

In contrast, Cathy held different academic and behavioral expectations for her Title I students than she did for other students. When her Title I students were away from the classroom, she engaged the remaining students in more challenging literacy activities than she did when all the children were present. While the school at which Renee taught did not receive Title I funds, some of her students received special services including two who went through Reading Recovery, one who was in ESL, and another child who was developmentally delayed. Three of the four African American children in the classroom were isolated from the rest of the students, including the students who went through Reading Recovery and child who was developmentally delayed.

Grouping Practices. The two TUC graduates also promoted equity through their grouping practices. Mary created reading groups by assigning the strongest readers to one group, the lowest readers to another group, and allowing the rest of the students to choose from the high and middle groups or the middle and low groups. Although these groups were based primarily on ability, given most students' high level of engagement in class activities, they did not appear to lead to

status inequalities, for which there are two probable explanations. For one, Mary initially focused on the same set of basic skills with two of the groups and eventually all three groups learned to identify the plot and main characters. Second, the groups were disbanded midway through the year and the time was devoted instead to independent reading and partner reading.

In her classroom, Sarah used reading groups once a week. While these groups were based primarily on ability, they did not lead to status differences among students based on their conceptions of themselves or their peers because Sarah employed other grouping practices, having them work in pairs or by themselves, much more frequently. In fact, Sarah's frequent use of partners in reading and writing was part of her effort to establish a sense of community in her classroom in which all students were treated respectfully. In this way, her expectations for her students differed not only from those held by Cathy and Renee, but also from the expectations of Mary, the other TUC graduate in the study.

In contrast, Cathy and her colleague, Debbie, divided their two classes into two groups based on ability for language arts and math and provided different types of instruction to each group. It is probable that the students in the high-ability group made more progress over the course of the year in reading, writing, and math than their counterparts in the low-ability group. For her part, Renee employed reading groups that were primarily based on ability. These groups contributed to status differences because students in different groups engaged in different activities. In particular, while Renee read stories with most of the groups, she usually had the children in the lowest group practice basic literacy skills.

The classroom environment as a whole. While all four teachers held a multidimensional view of ability, only Sarah worked consistently to promote community among her students. At the beginning of the year, she spoke with her students about name-calling and the importance of treating others with respect. Throughout the year, she addressed issues of fairness and social justice in her curriculum and asked students to reflect on how different groups, including African Americans, Native Americans, and women, had been treated in the U.S. In addition, she frequently assigned students of different backgrounds and ability levels

to work together with the clear expectation that they were to cooperate with each other. Sarah's efforts resulted in a classroom environment where all students felt valued and capable of academic success, as evidenced by the high levels of participation on the part of several minority, low-income students.

Influence of Teacher Education

The high expectations that Mary and Sarah held for their students and their efforts to establish equitable learning environments can be attributed to their experiences prior to and during the TUC program. Mary developed high expectations for students as a result of working at the Danville Child Development Center (DCDC) where she spent extensive time with African American children and their families for the first time in her life. She found that most parents at DCDC were employed or in school. In her words, "there were not a lot of parents that weren't working in one form or another. Either working for money or working for an education. And all of the parents really cared about their kids' well-being."

Sarah's belief that all of her students were capable of academic success and her desire to promote a sense of community among them were shaped by her background prior to teacher preparation. In particular, she earned a master's degree in social work and worked as a community organizer in New York for four years. Through these experiences, she confronted the fact that many people in our society live in poverty largely because of racism, class oppression, and the economic structure in our country. For her, it was "shattering to realize that the world is bad in a lot of ways." In response, though, she became dedicated to working with racially and socio-economically diverse groups to help them be part of our diverse society and improve their material and psychological well being

The high expectations that Mary and Sarah had for their students were also shaped by their experiences in the TUC program. Several professors in the program assigned readings about teachers who were effective with minority, low-income students and strongly emphasized the importance of maintaining high expectations for all students, developing strong relationships with them, and identifying their

unique abilities. In contrast, while the non-TUC graduates had some professors who stressed the need to establish high expectations and develop strong relationships with students, these messages were not reinforced as often or by as many faculty members.

At Frederick Elementary School, where Mary did her student teaching and was later hired, the belief that all students are capable of academic success was prevalent among the staff. From her cooperating teacher, Mary learned several strategies that reduced the effects of status differences among students. For example, this teacher used academic tasks that involved divergent processes and resulted in divergent products as well as assessment procedures that compared students' performances with their own previous efforts, as opposed to comparing them with their peers.

For Sarah, the TUC program's emphasis on developing close relationships with students was similar to organizing which involved getting to know and working closely with others. Further, the work processes employed by Sarah's cooperating teacher reduced the effects of status differences among students on their perceptions of themselves and their peers. This teacher only used ability groups once a week. Instead, she often had flexible, small groups in her classroom, which brought together different sets of students on different occasions. With regard to assessment, this teacher compared students' performances to their own previous efforts. Finally, she structured her classroom in ways that promoted a sense of community among the students. From her, Sarah adopted several strategies including having the children come together in a circle throughout the day, organize and help run the classroom, and share their knowledge with others in cooperative tasks.

With regard to the context in which Sarah worked, many teachers at Peters had been teaching for ten or more years and were used to teaching students who were White and middle class or working class. As their school was becoming increasingly diverse, some of these teachers were finding that their curricular and pedagogical practices were ineffective with minority, low-income students. Although they generally held low expectations for such students, these teachers did

not affect Sarah's expectations for students or her commitment to creating a sense of community among them.

For both Mary and Sarah, their belief that all students are capable of academic success can be traced to their experiences prior to and during formal preparation. In this regard, it is useful to compare their practices with those of Renee. As a result of her own educational experiences and the children's experiences in desegregated schools, Renee strongly believed that all students are capable of academic success, regardless of their race and socio-economic status. In contrast to Mary and Sarah, though, her grouping practices and approach to the provision of special services failed to reduce the effects of status differences among her students. This is probably due to the fact that there was less attention in Renee's courses and student teaching to the potentially deleterious effects of ability grouping and isolating students in order to provide them with special services.

While the TUC program impacted the beliefs and practices of Mary and Sarah to some extent, it is not possible from this research to determine the relative influence of the program on these teachers versus the effect of their experiences prior to formal preparation or the context in which they worked. Further, it is important to note that the two TUC graduates were differentially affected by some aspects of the program. For example, there was a strong emphasis on community built into TUC's course work and field experiences. As mentioned above, each program cohort consisted of 25 students who took all of their courses together without non-TUC students, and each cohort was divided into three groups of approximately eight students who did their student teaching at the same school. These small groups came together in weekly school-based seminars to reflect on their experiences during student teaching.

For Sarah, the communal structure of the TUC program as well as her experiences as a community organizer and with her cooperating teacher led her to place a high priority on building a sense of community among her students. In contrast, the research revealed that a strong sense of community did not obtain among the students in Mary's classroom. Most of the African American girls kept to themselves and avoided working with White girls; two White boys often

experienced conflict with each other and other students; and one Latino boy was isolated from most of the other students and frequently not engaged in academic work. The lack of community can be attributed to the highly individualized nature of Mary's literacy instruction, which was intended to reduce the stigma associated with receiving special services as well as the high rate of mobility among her students, many whom were from poor families that moved frequently. Nonetheless, this absence of community indicates that not all aspects of the program influenced participants in the same way.

Incorporating Knowledge of Students into Instruction

Successful teachers of minority, low-income students are familiar with their students' interests, experiences, and cultural backgrounds, and incorporate them into the curriculum (Foster, 1993; Moll and Gonzalez, 1994). In a study of exemplary African American teachers, Foster found that many of them "incorporate(d) classroom activities that (were) based on African American community norms," including church forms such as plays, choral reading, and poetry recitations. In another study, Moll and Gonzalez helped teachers of African American and Latino students to identify cultural resources in their students' households and communities (1994). In doing so, the teachers developed higher expectations for their students and came to view their families and communities more positively.

Banks identified four approaches to integrating information about the histories and contributions of various cultural groups into the curriculum (1993). The contributions approach is the most superficial approach to content integration, focusing on important individuals, holidays, and other discrete aspects of particular cultures. In the additive approach, teachers "append ethnic content, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure" (1993, p.23). The transformation approach involves altering the structure of the curriculum to help students learn to analyze issues and events from the perspectives of different cultural groups. Finally, the social action approach is an extension of the

transformation approach in which "students make decisions on important social issues and take action to help solve them" (1993, p.23).

Making Use of Knowledge of Students' Interests and Experiences. All four teachers in the study incorporated knowledge of their students' interests and experiences into the curriculum. For class news, Sarah's students collectively identified writing topics and then divided into pairs to write articles about them. Mary's students conducted independent research projects in which they selected a topic, developed ten questions about the topic, and used books to answer their questions. Further, both teachers allowed their students to choose their own reading books and regularly provided time for them to read by themselves or with partners.

Both Renee and Cathy employed multiple strategies for learning about their students' interests. Renee acquired information about them through parent conferences, sharing time, and observations outside of the classroom. Based on what she learned during the parent conferences, she developed units on insects, dinosaurs, and monsters. As for Cathy, she learned about her students during parent conferences, Writing-To-Read, and observations during free play.

Making Use of Knowledge of Students' Cultural Backgrounds. While each teacher's curricular practices were often based on their students' interests and experiences, they used divergent approaches to incorporating knowledge of their students' cultural backgrounds into the curriculum. Cathy's efforts to include information about her students' cultural backgrounds were the most superficial. In December, for example, she and Debbie did a unit that focused on four different winter holidays: Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and the Chinese New Year. Cathy taught all of the children in both classrooms about Christmas and the Chinese New Year while Debbie taught them about the other two holidays. For the Chinese New Year, Cathy read several books about the holiday, studied the Chinese calendar, and had the children practice Chinese writing. She did not talk with the children about the experiences of Chinese and other Asian immigrants in the U.S., though, nor did she incorporate Asian content, themes, or perspectives into her regular curriculum.

In contrast to Cathy, Mary and Renee both used an additive approach to content integration. In February, Mary read *Marching to Freedom*, a story about the civil rights movement, to her students and asked them to write about why they were proud of Martin Luther King, Jr. and ways in which they were similar to him. All of her students, especially those who were African American, reacted strongly to the story and were very engaged in completing the assignments. At the same time, Mary presented this story without discussing the larger context of the civil rights movement. In particular, she presented little information about the laws and social institutions against which King and other activists were reacting. As a result, while her students had the opportunity to learn about King, they weren't developing a critical perspective on the nature of American society.

Later in the year, in a unit on the history of the local community, Mary's students learned that several American Indian tribes were pushed off of their land by European settlers. The students studied old maps of the community and saw where the tribes had lived and when they were displaced from their land. In the unit Mary emphasized the unjust way in which the tribes were treated. Then she asked her students to consider the settlers' perspective:

> "You were having a hard time understanding what happened because it was so unfair. Even if we think what the settlers did was wrong, I still want you to think about what they were thinking and why they did what they did."
>
> Melissa raised her hand and said, "They wanted the Indians' land. They wanted to take the land in order to build houses, and grow food, and make money."

In this instance, Mary was helping her students assume multiple perspectives. While this was noteworthy, she did not go on to relate the behavior of the White settlers to the behavior of the other Whites towards Native Americans in other parts of the country. Again, she missed an opportunity to help them acquire a critical stance towards U.S. history.

For her part, Renee integrated cultural content into her curriculum through a combination of the contributions and additive approaches. Her use of a Peace Corps calendar was emblematic of the contributions approach. This calendar listed the

anniversaries of important events, including the dates of birth of important leaders, revolutions, and cultural celebrations. On some mornings, she and the children would discuss these events, but Renee never related them to the histories of the countries themselves or the structure of their social relations. Consequently, the children were introduced to such figures as Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Mother Theresa but learned very little about the social contexts in which these individuals lived.

In March, Renee taught a unit in which the class learned about the languages and customs of children from various countries. In her words, children had to identify whether their relatives were originally from Europe, Africa, Asia, or Latin America; and they had to select a country from that continent and learn what it would be like to be a child there." An example of the additive approach, this unit enabled students to learn some information about other nations and cultural groups, but it did not help them develop a critical perspective on U.S. society or other countries. In particular, Renee did not have the children inquire about the histories of the countries they studied, their accomplishments, their relations with other countries including the U.S., or even the role and status of their children.

Sarah was the only teacher in the study to employ the transformation approach to content integration. Many of her curricular units reflected her students' backgrounds and helped them learn to think critically. In March, for Women's History Month, she invited several women who work in non-traditional fields to visit the classroom and talk with the children about their occupations. The children were visited by a firefighter, a veterinarian, a pilot, and a steam-fitter. In Sarah's words, "it was particularly good for the girls, but I was glad to see that the boys were interested in a lot of the visitors, too, especially the firefighter and the pilot."

In February, Sarah did a unit on the civil rights movement in the United States to secure voting rights for African Americans and to desegregate schools and other public institutions. Her students read about important figures in the civil rights era including Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Emmett Till; and they wrote "autobiographies," in which they developed a narrative from the perspective of someone who lived at that time. As part of this unit, the class made a short film

based on *The Story of Ruby Bridges,* a book about a six-year-old African American who integrated the New Orleans public schools in 1960. Sarah's students chose their own roles and many played characters of different races than their own. For example, Ruby Bridges was portrayed by a Hmong girl, her parents were portrayed by a White girl and a White boy, and her brother was portrayed by an Asian boy.

The film included a powerful scene in which several angry White adults, played by children of different races, gathered outside the formerly all-White school that Ruby had integrated and shouted "Stay Away! Stay Away!" In another scene, a White father played by an African American child, was talking with his daughter, also played by an African American. He told her that she needed to go to school to learn to read and write. Then the narrator stated, "Little by little, the White families started by sending their kids to school, and the school became racially integrated." By reenacting scenes from *The Story of Ruby Bridges,* the children considered the events in the story from a range of perspectives, learned what desegregation meant, and developed a critical perspective on the recent history of relations between Whites and African Americans in the U.S.

Influence of Teacher Education

Sarah's approach to content integration was influenced by her experiences prior to and during the TUC program. Her concern with incorporating her students' cultural backgrounds into her curriculum was shaped by her social studies methods course, which was taught by her advisor. In that course, her advisor presented several ways of making the curriculum relevant to students and repeatedly emphasized the importance of examining U.S. history from the perspective of marginalized groups.

> "Like the rest of the program, the course approached education from a political perspective. We learned how groups have been disenfranchised by schools, how their histories have been ignored. We learned about the need to help students think critically about the experiences that different racial and socio-economic groups and, of course, women have had in this country."

Sarah's background predisposed her to respond affirmatively to the political orientation of this course and the entire TUC program. In particular, the transformation approach to content integration was consistent with her experiences as a community organizer and her commitment to fighting oppression. Unlike the other teachers in the study, she had extensive knowledge of the histories of and relations among various cultural groups. Consequently, employing the transformation approach enabled her to make use of this prior knowledge.

The context at Peters did not interfere with Sarah's efforts to help children learn to think critically about social issues and historical events. For the first few months of the year, she had some concerns about how she would be seen by her students' parents and her colleagues. In her words, "I didn't want to be perceived as a kook because then I wouldn't have had any effect at the school." When she started the unit on the civil rights movement, she was nervous, but no one said anything to her except for one parent who was thrilled. After her class made the video on Ruby Bridges, the rest of the staff saw it and commended it, including the principal who thought it was outstanding.

For her part, despite the fact that many of Mary's professors and colleagues at Frederick Elementary School advocated the transformation approach, she did not help her students acquire critical perspectives on U.S. society. Her relative lack of attention to students' cultural backgrounds in her curriculum can be attributed to two factors. For one, she indicated in an interview that she viewed helping students learn to think critically as a long-term goal. Perhaps she anticipated drawing more extensively on students' cultural backgrounds as she improved her ability to teach critical thinking skills.

Second, it is likely that Mary, like many other White teachers, lacked knowledge of African American, Latino, and Hmong cultures, and the histories of these and other groups that have been marginalized in the U.S. (Banks, 1991; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996). While the TUC program aimed to prepare teachers who would be disposed to incorporate their students' cultural backgrounds into their instructional practices, due to it's brief length, the program may not have helped participants acquire knowledge about the experiences and contributions of different

cultural groups in the U.S. Consequently, as with the other teachers in the study, the impact of teacher preparation on Mary's beliefs and practices must be viewed in combination with her prior knowledge and experiences.

In Renee's teacher education program, some of the professors emphasized the importance of developing units based on children's cultural backgrounds. There are two possible reasons, though, for Renee's relatively superficial approach to content integration. For one, it is likely that she lacked knowledge of the histories and contributions of various cultural groups. Second, as evidenced by the following comments about her children's experiences in desegregated schools, she believed that schools should play a neutral role in shaping students' attitudes towards individuals and groups from other racial and socio-economic backgrounds.

> "The desegregation plan really tore the neighborhood I live in apart. It was a very difficult time, but I saw with firsthand knowledge that it doesn't make any difference where kids go to school or who they go to school with. I'm sure my kids came into situations a lot sooner than they otherwise would have, but in the long run they had a good education."

As for Cathy, some of the professors in her preparation program had stressed the need for teachers to incorporate knowledge of their students' cultural backgrounds into their curriculum. Due to her culturally encapsulated upbringing, though, and her plans to teach in the community in which she had been raised, Cathy felt their attention to cultural diversity was largely irrelevant to her. While she was beginning to understand the importance of content integration, as a result of collaborating with Sarah, she had yet to move beyond the contributions approach.

Conclusion

In view of the changing demographics of the student population in the U.S. and the fact that many elementary and secondary schools serve minority, low-income students poorly, it is imperative that preparation programs be redesigned in order to prepare teachers to work effectively with culturally diverse students and to

foster school renewal. The contrasts between the two pairs of teachers in this study suggests that programs that integrate attention to diversity may be more likely to produce teachers with such qualities than programs that adopt a segregated approach. At the same time, as the study reveals, it is no easy task to ascertain the ways in which teachers are impacted by integrated programs for diversity. In this concluding section, I examine research on preparation programs that address diversity through a segregated approach, discuss the main findings from the study as well as some of the challenges involved in trying to determine the impact of integrated programs on teachers' beliefs and practices, and discuss the implications of this work for future research.

Programs that Use a Segregated Approach to Diversity. Several researchers have found that preparation programs that address issues of diversity in individual courses or single field experiences have a limited impact on teachers' beliefs and practices regarding diversity (Zeichner and Hoeft, 1996). In a study of 19 White preservice elementary school teachers at a large midwestern university, Grant and Koskella found that the information they received about "education that is multicultural" (EMC) was "fragmented and piecemeal, and it emphasized individual differences" (1986, p.201). Eight of the 19 prospective teachers attempted to incorporate multicultural ideas into their instructional practices while they were student teaching, but they reported having little success. The student teachers' difficulties were attributed to not having university instructors who could demonstrate "how to implement EMC concepts into the daily curriculum," nor collaborating teachers who supported and encouraged their efforts (Grant and Koskella, 1986, p.202).

In another study, Goodwin (1994) examined the instructional practices of 80 preservice teachers during student teaching. Fifty-four of the prospective teachers were in an elementary preparation program while the others were preparing to become secondary school teachers in English, social studies, or science; or seeking their certification in such areas as art, music, and physical education. Goodwin found that 19 of the 80 prospective teachers had neither observed nor implemented any multicultural practices. The remaining 61 study participants mentioned 193

practices, the majority of which involved specific content, celebrations, food, or the use of specific materials. Within the content areas, "multicultural practice referred to superficial explorations of the artifacts of culture - folktales, music, dances, historical facts, and so forth" (Goodwin, 1994, p.124). Consequently, more than half of the multicultural practices observed or implemented by the student teachers were representative of the contributions or additive approaches to content integration. In contrast, less than 25 percent of the practices helped students assume diverse perspectives or addressed the climate of the classroom.

In an analysis of the coursework in several teacher education programs, Sleeter (1988) found that limited attention to multicultural education during preservice training has little effect on teachers' beliefs and practices While such attention "may alert them to the importance of maintaining high expectations," and "give them a greater repertoire of teaching strategies to use with culturally diverse students," this intervention alone is not sufficient for significant reform of teaching to occur (Sleeter, 1988, p.29). Finally, Haberman and Post (1992) examined the beliefs of student teachers whose placements had occurred in schools that serve high percentages of minority, low-income students. The researchers found that the field experiences served to reaffirm the prospective teachers' initial perceptions of culturally diverse students. In particular, many White students, who had initially viewed such students as being culturally deficient, became hardened in their beliefs (Haberman and Post, 1992).

Integrated Teacher Education Programs for Diversity. Given the limited impact of teacher education programs that address cultural diversity through a segregated approach, educators and policy makers have become increasingly interested in programs that integrate attention to diversity throughout their courses and field experiences. In recent years, a number of such programs have been implemented, including Project START at the University of Pennsylvania (Cochran-Smith, 1995). As yet, however, there has been very little research that has examined the effects of integrated programs on teachers' beliefs and practices regarding diversity. This study was an attempt to understand the effects of one such program, the Teaching in Urban Contexts (TUC) program, on the beliefs and

practices of two elementary school teachers. Given the small sample size, the study provided little information on the broad effects of the TUC program on teachers who work with culturally diverse students. At the same time, the study did produce some noteworthy findings, which have implications for further research, as well as raising some concerns that should be addressed in future studies of integrated programs for diversity.

The study indicated that the practices of the TUC teachers were more consistent with their stated beliefs that all children are capable of academic success than were the practices of the other teachers. While all four teachers used academic tasks and assessment procedures that reduced status inequalities among students, Sarah and Mary, in contrast to their counterparts, also coordinated the provision of special services and employed grouping practices in ways that demonstrated that they had high expectations for all students. Along with the teachers' prior experiences, two aspects of the TUC program contributed to this finding. For one, students were only admitted to the program if they were committed to working with diverse populations and helping all students achieve academic success. Second, the university instructors and cooperating teachers inculcated the belief that all children are capable of success. In particular, many of these individuals helped the program participants understand how the teaching and learning processes that go on in classrooms can strengthen or lower students' self-perceptions and their perceptions of their peers.

While these aspects of the TUC program clearly influenced the expectations and practices of Mary and Sarah to some extent, it not possible from this research to ascertain their relative influence versus the effect of the teachers' experiences prior to formal preparation or the contexts in which they worked. This represents one of the main challenges to determining the impact of integrated programs for diversity on teachers' beliefs and practices. One idea for future research would be to consider whether most or all TUC graduates use similar processes in teaching reading and writing. If so, it would indicate that TUC's integrated approach to diversity produces teachers who employ teaching and learning processes that promote high self-perceptions among students and teachers regarding student ability. If it turns out

that many TUC graduates do not use similar processes, this would indicate that the practices of Sarah and Mary should be attributed to other factors along with their professional preparation.

A second finding was that only one of the study participants, Sarah, promoted community among her students. Throughout the courses and field experiences in the TUC program, the professors and school staff stressed the importance of building a sense of community in the classroom. In the words of one university instructor, "A number of courses address this and a number of people had that as the focus for their master's project." It is important to note, though, that Mary, the other TUC graduate, did not build a strong sense of community among her students. While this was due in part to the high rate of mobility among her students and her concern with meeting students' individual needs, it also demonstrates that the program does not always produce teachers who establish community in their classrooms. Thus, a second challenge to studying integrated programs is manifest: the fact that participants in the same program are often influenced in different ways by various components of the program.

A third finding from the study was that, due in part to her background in community organizing, Sarah incorporated knowledge of her students' cultural backgrounds into her instructional practices, and helped her students learn to think critically about U.S. society. On the other hand, Mary employed an additive approach to content integration, often failing to help students examine important events from multiple perspectives, and rarely placing such events in the larger context of relations between Whites and other groups that historically have been marginalized in the U.S. With regard to further research, since the master's TUC program was experimental and has been discontinued, it would not be possible to examine how participants' reactions to various program components are shaped by their backgrounds as they go through the program. Many features of the program, though, have been implemented in the university's elementary education program for bachelor's degree candidates. Therefore, it would be feasible to consider how the prospective teachers in this program react to the emphasis on the transformation

approach to content integration, and how their reactions are shaped by their backgrounds.

Finally, it should be noted that there are numerous ways to integrate attention to diversity in teacher preparation. Ideally, it would be useful to examine the effects of the TUC program on the beliefs and practices of a large number of program graduates and to compare its effects with those of one or two other teacher education programs that also employ an integrated approach to preparing teachers for diversity. In examining the effects of various programs on teachers' beliefs and practices, it would be important to compare teachers who teach in the same content area and at the same grade level, who serve comparable populations, and who have been teaching for similar amounts of time.

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